

First a United Nations **Now a United Religions**

by Irvin Baxter Jr.

On June 26, 2000, I watched as Bishop William Swing picked up the pen, becoming the first signer of the constitution of the United Religions Initiative. The stated goal of the URI is to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings.

It really doesn't sound too bad to me. After all, I'm against violence. I'm for peace, and for justice and for healing. Yet a very persistent nagging at the root of my belief system just wouldn't leave me alone.

Really now! Did they seriously expect me, as a Christian, to validate Buddhists, Muslims, Indigenous worshippers of the Great White Spirit, Wiccans (witches) and the myriad other pagan faiths that were represented at the signing? Were they serious when they said I should denounce proselytizing (trying to convert practitioners of other faiths to Christianity) and that I should respect all religions as having value?

This goes against everything that the Bible teaches. How about the uncompromising declaration of Jesus, "...for if ye



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The founder of the United Religions Initiative, Bishop William Swing, is the first to sign the charter that gave birth to the global religious organization.

believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). And then there is Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

The United Religions was the contends that it is this kind of narrow-minded, literal interpretation of scripture that has led to so much religious conflict throughout the ages. Granted, there have been a lot of wars fought over religious ideology. But I've never fought a

war over religion. I have never even attempted to force anyone to be a Christian. Furthermore, a true Christian never would. The Bible itself teaches us to "...do violence to no man."

Oh yes...one more thing! I was haunted by the prophecies in the Bible that foretell a global government and a global religious system. I've been alarmed for some time by the world's blind acceptance of the "World Community" intervening in the sovereign affairs of nations. Of course, the United Nations has

always disguised its emergence as a one-world government by referring to itself as the “World Community” or the “International Community.” But after the violations of national sovereignty in Haiti, Bosnia, Yugoslavia and then East Timor, it became obvious that what we have on our hands is, in fact, a one-world government.

So the fulfillment of the global government part of the prophecies is far advanced at this present time. When I began to read about the possibility of a United Religions organization that would act as a sister organization to the UN, I was filled with no small intrepidation.

And now here I was, sitting in Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, personally witnessing the birth of the United Religions. To make my misgivings worse, the signing of the United Religions constitution was purposely taking place on June 26th because the constitution of the United Nations had been signed fifty-five years prior on the very same day. Had I just witnessed the planting of the second leg of the politics and religion tandem spoken of in Bible prophecy?

The ceremony began with a march from the Carnegie Mellon campus to Carnegie Music Hall approximately three blocks away. The Manipuri drummers from India set the cadence for the marchers with the methodical beating of their drums. Following behind were representatives of many religions, all dressed in the costumes of their particular religious traditions. There were Baha’i, Buddhists, Jews, Muslims, Zoroastrians, Wiccans, Catholics, Protestants, Hindus, Hoa Hao, Taoists, Cao Dao, Sikh, Indigenous People and many others.

Once the procession entered Carnegie Music Hall, the delegates made their way to their respective places. The Manipuri worshippers, bare from the waist up, continued to beat their drums until all were seated.

After preliminary remarks were made, Mrs. Ny Gedong Oka of Indonesia led the Interfaith gathering in prayer. Sitting in the Lotus position on a stool, she prayed in her native tongue and repeated each phrase in English. After a few minutes of prayer, she then progressed deeper into her meditation. “Om,” she prayed.

And then came the refrain from the



Delegates march from Carnegie Mellon Student Center to Carnegie Music Hall for the charter signing ceremony.

congregation, “Om.”

Again she intoned, “Om.”

This time the refrain from the delegates was a little louder, “Om.”

Back and forth the response continued until the echo of the Hindu prayer was heard throughout Carnegie Music Hall. It appeared that most of the delegates, whether Hindu or not, entered into the Hindu refrain. It was definitely an unprecedented Interfaith moment. As for me, my hair bristled on the back of my neck as supposed Christians slid easily into the act of pagan worship.

Then came the phone call from the United Nations. The UN official extended the United Nations’ congratulations on the birth of the United Religions. The call was amplified over the PA system for all to hear. It was obvious that a very close relationship exists between the United Nations and the United Religions.

When the crowning moment of signing the United Religions Constitution arrived, Bishop William Swing, head of the United Religions Initiative, was afforded the honor of being the first signer. Other attendees then added their signatures to the document.

Once the signing was complete, enthusiastic applause erupted from the

delegates. From a balcony a Jewish rabbi sounded on the shofar in Interfaith celebration. The United Religions was born!

And all of this without mentioning the name of Jesus one time!

The birth of the United Religions was webcast live around the world. A chat room was available on the Internet so that people could ask questions during the signing ceremonies. *Endtime* staff member Dan Barkley visited with the woman who was operating the chat room for the United Religions. Noticing that she was wearing an unusual headband, Dan asked what its significance might be. She informed him that the insignias on the headband indicated that she was a Wiccan high priestess, in other words—a witch.

It was absolutely beyond belief! A witch was running the chat room for the birth of the United Religions?! Can you believe it?!

“...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). □